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ABSTRACT

This five-session research-based program trains parents in various skills through a series of experiential learning activities. An introductory chapter reviews the problem initiating the study, the purpose, importance, assumption, limitations, and plan of the study, along with a definition of terms. Next, a literature review examines materials which focus on parent involvement, leader guidelines, content, and success. The parent program itself covers the topics of active listening, talking to children, self-concept and acceptance, problem prevention and resolution, and constructive discipline. Plans for each session include step-by-step instructions for the leader, and copies for handouts which provide a workbook and reference for the parents. Each session is structured to include opportunity for small group interaction and support activities. Activities were selected on the basis of appropriateness to the sequence and research evidence supporting their effectiveness. (Author/LS)

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A PROGRAM TO IMPROVE PARENTING TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS

by

Phyllis Thomas Novick

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In her eleven years of teaching the author has noted that her effectiveness as a teacher is aided or limited by the effectiveness of the parents. In these years the author has had many opportunities to interact with parents and also to observe parent-child interactions. Where the parents have been effective in dealing with the child especially in a positive, non-threatening way, the pupil has made progress. Too often, however, the author has noted a lack of successful techniques in dealing with children on the part of the parents. Also, parents have directly expressed frustration in their roles and have asked the author for direction and guidance. They were at a loss in helping their child function successfully.

Problems observed (among parents with good intentions) included inconsistency with punishment and rewards, inability to communicate effectively, and non-realization of the importance of developing and nurturing a healthy self-concept.

Additionally, there is an increasing number of one-parent homes. These single parents need added direction and support in coping with their child-rearing responsibilities.

Where parents are ineffective as partners in the educational process with teachers, pupil progress is limited. The author has found it almost impossible to overcome the feelings of worthlessness a child may bring from home. Not only are such children unhappy and unsuccessful themselves, but they may cause a disruption in the learning process of others. Also, they lack the important role models needed to become successful parents themselves.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to design a program suited to the parenting needs of the parents of students of Hillcrest School in Franklin Township.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This program will be a model for other teachers and/or counselors. Hopefully, it will provide the impetus for other teachers to undertake running a similar program for the parents of their students.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The term, communi cation, will be used by the author to mean being able to clearly express one's feeling and thoughts. In return, one is able to listen in order to understand the feelings and thoughts of others.

The term, self-concept, is the sum of all the beliefs and attitudes one has about oneself. A child with a

positive self-concept would be eager and unafraid of taking risks in a new learning situation, would not feel threatened when being corrected, and would be able to withstand normal teasing from his/her peers.

ASSUMPTION AND LIMITATIONS

It is assumed that the participating parents will be willing to implement the techniques presented and perhaps, change their behavior in so doing.

PLAN OF STUDY

A program will be developed to introduce parenting techniques. Role playing situations will be developed to provide practice in the newly learned behaviors. The lessons will be designed to maximize participant involvement. Opportunities will be provided for discussion and analysis of implementation of the learned techniques.

Interwoven in the lessons will be strategies to strengthen parental self-concepts. Support groups will be formed to provide encouragement and a feeling of acceptance. This may encourage full participation by parents.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are a great variety of parent training courses and programs available. The range covers those directed to high school and college age people within their school settings. There are also programs tailored for parents of pre-schoolers, parents of physically handicapped, parents of emotionally maladjusted, parents of educationally disadvantaged, and even courses for childless couples who have yet to make a decision concerning parenthood. Finally, there are programs for parents of "normal" children.

Courses are offered free or for a cost. They are held in schools, churches, and living rooms. They may vary in length from four sessions to ten sessions, or in the case of college courses, 15 sessions. Each session runs about two hours in length and most courses meet on a weekly basis.

GETTING PARENTS INTERESTED

Various ways to publicize parenting courses have been used. Among them are radio announcements, newspaper releases, fliers in churches and community centers, posters throughout the city, direct mailings. Referrals can be made at parent-teacher conferences, home visits might be made,

and brochures can be taken home by school children.

GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS

Leaders shouldn't feel they must have a solution to every problem. Sometimes just listening to a parent helps. Leaders should admit their own mistakes and not be afraid to show they are human. Other tips are:

1. Give parents a chance to talk.
2. Have people define their terms.
3. Vary tone and pace of meetings.
4. Don't impose goals on the group.
5. Don't give magic solutions; help parents weigh alternatives and make decisions.
6. Don't be intimidated by the parents.
7. Pay attention to the successes and help parents become aware of the many positive things that happen with their children.[1]
8. Give participants a chance to practice the skills taught through role playing situations.
9. Have books on parenting available to loan to parents.[2]
10. Provide handouts for parents to read between sessions.[3]

The Communication and Parenting Skills (CAPS) program offered eight principles for skill training:

1. "Experiential learning is necessary for learning new behavioral skills." Practicing skills makes them meaningful, makes the learner more comfortable when

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[1]Christine Y. O'Connell, "Helping Parents with their Children," Today's Education, Nov.-Dec. 1976, pp. 43-44.

[2]Statement by Harry Bernstein, social worker Woodbridge Township, N.J. Public Schools, in a telephone interview, February 17, 1978.

[3]Statement by Deena Horn, social worker, Rockaway, N.J. School System, in a personal interview, December 27, 1979.

using them, and thereby increases the chances that the new behaviors will be used.

2. "The leader's role is that of guide not expert." The leader can teach the skills but it is up to the learners to integrate them into their own situations and recognize when and how to apply them.
3. "The leader also guides indirectly by being a model for parents...Parents will observe the leader putting the skills to use fluently, appropriately, effectively, and above all, genuinely."
4. "In structured modeling, the leader...contrasts effective with ineffective responses." This presents a basis for discussion and more clearly delineates appropriate and inappropriate responses. These are presented within the context of real life situations which facilitates their integration by the students.
5. "...as many examples as possible should stem from real life experiences to demonstrate meaningful applicability and relevance." The leader should use examples from his/her own family life and other personal experiences.
6. "Generalizations of the skills to real life situations." The leaders encourage trying out the skills learned when participants are at home and likewise encourage feedback on successes and failures at the next session.

7. "Experimentation proceeds from the relatively simple to the complex." Each skill should be gradually built upon "basing learning upon relevant foundations."
8. "...attitudinal changes will occur simultaneously or will follow from behavioral changes."[4]

The CAPS leader's guide also stressed the importance of carefully structuring each session to prevent individuals from taking the focus off the topic. A brief outline of the session's agenda should be presented at the beginning of each session. "The balance between sensitivity and willingness to listen to parents' feelings and being task-oriented is sometimes problematic. However, an experienced leader usually encounters little difficulty."[5]

CONTENT

There is a great variety in the techniques used to facilitate acquisition and refinement of parenting skills: lecture, discussion, worksheets, role play, group exercises. Whatever the implementation, several common emphases in content are apparent.

A basic component is a session on communication skills between parent and child. This includes the parent

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[4]Judith Frankel D'Augelli, Ph.D. and J.M. Weener, Communication and Parenting Skills, Leader's Guide, (University Park, Penna.: Pennsylvania State University, 1977), pp. 11-13.

[5]Ibid. p. 13.

understanding his/her own feelings in a situation and in turn being able to understand the feelings of the child. This does not necessarily mean sharing or condoning the feelings but accepting them rather than judging or denying them. Communication also means being able to express one's feelings in such a way as to make them clear to another person.

The skill of active listening is also given importance. This is being able to turn off everything else in the environment and give complete attention to listening to the other person and the "hearing" his/her feelings.

Another focus is the importance of developing and nurturing a healthy self-concept within the child. Since the population the author is drawing on for participants in her course is almost fifty percent Black, she was particularly interested in the comments of Dr. Samuel Woodard, a counselor and therapist specializing in Black Awareness training. He analyzed what factors make Black children succeed in spite of so many strikes against them. One of the main factors is "high self-esteem comprised of high self-concept (I am worthy of living) and self-confidence (I am competent to live)."[6]

Most courses included a model for problem-solving or conflict resolution.

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[6]Dr. Samuel L. Woodard, "Ten Ways to Help Your Child Succeed," Ebony, Vol. XXXII No. 12:52, October, 1977.

Allowing time for group discussion and feedback was part of each session that occurred with frequency in the courses examined. Deena Horn presented problem situations as a part of her class session and let course participants offer ways to handle them.[7] Dr. Seymour Siegler started each session with fifteen minutes of what he called "War Stories." [8]

Making use of group process activities in order to provide support and/or promote self-esteem for parents was an integral part of some courses. The author had the opportunity to experience these types of activities at Kean College and at a workshop given at the National Humanistic Education Center, Sagamore, New York. At NHEC she also was able to be a student participant in experiential learning situations. Having felt the successful impact of these techniques convinced the author of their value as a vital inclusion in each parent lesson.

Some therapists worked with entire families[9] and some courses suggested exercises to be done with entire families.[10] The CAPS Program has a "Home Activities" section

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[7]Horn, Loc. Cit.

[8]Statement by Seymour Siegler, Ed.D., Professor of Psychology, Brookdale Community College, Lincroft, N.J., in a phone interview Jan. 3, 1979.

[9]Virginia Satir, Peoplemaking, (Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, Inc.) 1972.

[10]Jerry and Char Glashagel, ed., Valuing Families: tools for values education in family life (sic), (New York: National Board of YWCA'S), 1977.

in each unit of its Parent Workbook to give further practice in applying skills and to extend the transfer of the skills beyond the course participants to their families.[11] The importance of families working together was further emphasized by Woodard. He found that "family pride and teamwork motivate self-respect and self-confidence" and that when a family value of excellence was present it helped (Black) children succeed. He stated, "Studies indicate that family influence is stronger than the school facilities, class size, or community support.[12]

SUCCESS

Though there may be a variation in content and technique, most participants in parenting courses benefited just from the support of the group. O'Connell also found some parents got an ego boost for themselves when they helped others with their problems. She found that as parents gained skills in working with their children, they (the parents) grew in self-confidence and used their abilities to help others.[13]

Maureen Miller also found parents received comfort just from knowing that others experience similar problems with their children. The parenting course she was asso-

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[11] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit. p. 13.

[12] Woodward, op. cit., p. 53.

[13] O'Connell, op. cit., p. 44.

ciated with was so successful that what originally started as a ten session program was expanded to thirty sessions.[14]

Pamela Daly helped to develop and implement a program for families of delinquent youth. In the program parents were taught skills to modify their children's behavior. She found parents were able to learn the techniques and apply them, resulting in a significant impact on changing their children's behavior.[15]

Catherine Brown evaluated the four dominant programs in parenting. She found that upon completion of a course, parents not only noted improved behavior in their children, but they also found they were able to "love and enjoy their kids".[16]

Dr. Siegler, who conducted parenting courses on the college level had mainly parents in his classes but also some students who were not parents and some grandparents who felt "We made mistakes with our children and want to do better with our grandchildren." He stated it was hard to measure the long range success of the course but during his

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[14]Maureen Miller, "Des Moines Family Learning Centers", Today's Education, 64:68-78, November 1975.

[15]Pamela B. Daly and others, "A Comprehensive Early Intervention Program for Families with Problem Children", ERIC Microfiche #ED150519. (Undated)

[16]Catherine Caldwell Brown, "It Changed My Life", Psychology Today, November, 1976, p. 48.

three years of teaching it, he has continually gotten "glowing reports" from his students concerning their successes. He felt there was definitely a positive carry-over that continued after completion of the course.[17]

"Parents who have 'graduated' from CAPS reported changes in their own behavior, in their children's behavior, and in their relationships. Many said they were better able to understand and communicate the child's point of view, had a heightened sensitivity to their child's feelings..."[18]

The research uncovered was most encouraging. Many techniques were available so that a leader might select those with which he/she felt most comfortable. The great number of programs available indicated that parents were seeking guidance from professionals.

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[17]Siegler, loc. cit.

[18]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., p. 5.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE PARENT PROGRAM

The author prepared plans for each parent session. Session One includes introductory and additional rapport-establishing activities. The remainder of the sessions include the following: an activity to summarize the previously taught skill, a feedback session to allow parents to report successes and/or failures in experimenting with the newly acquired skill, presentation of the new skill, role-playing or experiencing new skill, group discussion (questions, answers, clarification, refining), parent support activity, presentation of home activity. A list of goals precedes each session's activity. The activities are correlated with the goals. Handouts are an integral part of each session. Each participant will either be provided with or be encouraged to acquire a loose-leaf notebook for handouts. An evaluation sheet is offered for completion after each session. Coffee and cake will be available after each session.

Each session is expected to last two hours, not including refreshment time. The first session will last somewhat longer since extra time is spent on introductions and establishing rapport. If the group is large, it may be preferrable to distribute all materials pertaining to each session at the beginning of the session. This will save time.

The program is designed to be used with parent groups ranging in size from eight to twenty-four participants.

SESSION ONE

Goals:

A. Establish rapport between leader and participants.

B. Establish rapport among participants.

C. Establish atmosphere of acceptance and support.

D. Raise parents' sensitivity to feelings and needs of children.

E. Present skill - Active Listening.

F. Provide opportunity to practice the new skill.

G. Summarize and discuss skill.

H. Engage in support activity.

I. Present home activity.

Materials Needed: name tags, pencils, paper.

Procedures:

Goal A) 1. The leader greets participants at the door, hands out name tags, pencils, Information Sheet, and Parent-Child Relationships Sheet (pp. 17-18).

Goal A) B,C) 2. Have the group members pair off. Encourage them to choose someone they don't already know. Each interviews the other asking questions to get to know the other better. Then each person introduces his/her partner to the group. If the group is large, divide into groups of 8 or 12 for the introductions.

Goal A) 3. The leader makes introductory remarks (pp. 19-20).

Goal B) C,D) 4. Split participants into groups of four or six. Have each group select a recorder. Then ask them to list all of the things their parents said

or did to them that made them feel good and accepted - all the positive things they can think of. Allow about 5 minutes. Then turn the paper over and make a list of all the negative things their parents said or did - things that made them feel badly or unworthy.

Each group then shares their responses with the entire group. The leader makes a summary statement.

Goal E) 5. Present and discuss "Steps Involved in Active F,G) Listening" (pp. 21-22).

6. Role-play "Active Listening Dialog" (pp. 23-24).

7. Present and discuss chart - "Active Listening, Destructive Responses". (p. 25)

8. Present and discuss "Cues to Empathic Responding" (pp. 26-27).

9. Have the group brainstorm "feeling" words and list them on the chalkboard.

10. Present "How Is Your Child Feeling?". (p. 28). Have parents add words of their own. Suggest they use it as a reference if they need it.

11. Break into groups of three to work on "Practicing Empathic Responses" (pp. 29-31). Work on samples #1 - #7. For each have participants take turns being parent, child, observer. Parents may want to write in effective responses.

12. Bring entire group together for role-play of items #8 to 12. Use suggestions on sheet.

13. Distribute "Benefits of Active Listening" Suggest participants read through them on their own or discuss if time allows. (pp. 32-33)

Goal H) 14. Group sits in a circle. Each person completes I) the statement, "The nicest thing that happened to me today...". Each person has the option to pass. They may or may not choose to respond later. Explain that this activity can be used with their children and shows that the parent is interested in his/her feelings. (This activity is called a "whip".) This activity is optional and may be used at a later session.

Goal I) 15. Present the following home experiment activity. Give participants instruction that this is a

suggestion, not an assignment. "During a family discussion, try the requirement that each person must repeat the statement of the preceding person before he/she can say what he/she wants to say. This will focus on listening before speaking."[19]

16. Distribute and collect evaluation sheets (p. 34).

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[19]Glashagel, op. cit., p. 20.

INFORMATION SHEET

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

PHONE_____

Names and ages of your children:

_____

_____

_____

What do you hope to get out of this course?

_____

_____

_____

What are the areas of most concern to you in relation to your children?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PARENT CHILD RELATIONSHIPS[20]

LIFE WITH CHILDREN HAS MANY SMALL FRUSTRATIONS.

CONFLICTS AND DIFFERENCES AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS ARE INEVITABLE because each person is a unique and different individual.

CONFLICT AND DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN THEMSELVES ARE NOT "BAD". They are normal and to be respected. It is how they are dealt with that makes the difference.

NO ONE IS PERFECT. Both parents and children are humans who sometimes make mistakes in judgment and behavior.

BEING A PARENT IS A DIFFICULT TASK for which there sometimes seems to be little reward. One goal of this program is to increase the rewards and pleasures and reduce the frustrations and problems that occur.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PROBLEMLESS FAMILY. But a family can be happy even though there are the usual problems. Skillful handling of problems is part of the answer.

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[20] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., p. 47.

LEADER'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The leader should begin by giving any pertinent personal background information that may not have been included when she/he was introduced to the group.

Suggested Remarks:

It is important that you understand my role as leader. I do not have all of the answers to your problems. My goal is to help you as parents find solutions appropriate for you personally. I have knowledge about how to teach parenting skills, experience in working with children as a teacher and parent, but I do not know everything about all ages and developmental states of children. No one is an expert on everything. We are all learning. We all have something to offer the group in certain areas, but no one person has all of the answers. There are not necessarily right or wrong answers. Each person's remarks will be listened to and explored - but not judged or evaluated. Respect for each other's feelings is important. All feelings are acceptable-positive or negative.

I hope that all feelings and information disclosed in the sessions will be kept confidential.

This program is for educational purposes and is not intended as therapy. I will help you think through issues of concern to you but my goal is to educate parents in important new skills which they can use to resolve many of the problems which arise and also which promote a favorable

family environment.[21]

We need to be aware that each person in the family is unique. Each adult and child has his/her own needs. Therefore, conflict is inevitable...BUT we should not be thrown by conflict, instead we should learn how to deal with it. In this program we hope to arm you with a repertoire of skills that can be learned or refined to help toward successful parenting. Listen to the ideas presented, study them to see how they can apply to your particular situation, and try them to see how they can improve your family. Dr. Chaim Ginott said, "What we're talking about is not perfection, but a direction. I'd like to think of us aiming for seventy percent. But even ten percent would make an appreciable difference. When you're hungry, a little food is better than none."[22]

I hope you will be able to attend every session. Each new topic will be related to and build on preceding concepts, so if you miss some meetings it will detract from your success.

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[21]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., pp. 45-47.

[22]Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, Liberated Parents Liberated Children, (New York, New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1975), p. 58.

STEPS INVOLVED IN ACTIVE LISTENING[23]

Directions:

Participants read individually and leader orally the following steps to active listening. While the statements are being read, each participant places a check mark on those which he is actually doing now. Underline the statements which you would like to follow.

Child: "Boy do I have a lousy teacher this year. I don't like her. She's an old grouch."

1. The listener tries to really understand the feelings behind the words spoken.

2. After trying to figure out what the speaker feels about what is being said, the listener puts this into his own words and feeds back both content and feelings to the speaker.

"Sounds like you're really disappointed with your teacher."

3. In this way, the speaker has a chance to see if what he said and felt was correctly understood.

4. In active listening, the listener does not send back any message which shows evaluation, advice, correction, scolding, judgemental words -- only what he thinks the speaker said and felt.

5. The speaker then feels less threatened, accepted, freer to continue talking. This way communication isn't blocked.

Child: "I sure am."

6. The listener also can ask questions to keep communication lines open, questions such as: "I'd like to ask about...? If I heard you correctly, you felt that... Am I right in that?"

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[23]Maureen Miller, Family Learning Center Workshops: A Series for Growth and Getting Along Together, The Des Moines Family Learning Project, (Ankeny, Iowa: Des Moines Area Community College, 1975), p. 414.

7. The listener puts aside his own thoughts to "feel with" those of the speaker. He accepts the other's feelings even if they are different from his.

8. The listener is sincere -- he wants to hear and understand what the other is saying. He doesn't pretend interest. Children are quick to spot the real from the fake. "Phoniness," in listening can make the speaker close communication.

9. In actively listening to a child, the listener should really trust the child to be able to handle and work through a problem to a solution.

10. The listener should know that each member of the family is a unique individual with his own abilities and goals, his own feelings, and ways of thinking.

11. The listener should take time and attention. If you feel you cannot listen at that moment, say so, and arrange for a definite time when you can.

12. When you are listening, concentrate on the child's words, tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures.

*13. Be patient!! and persevere!

ACTIVE LISTENING DIALOGUE[24]

Directions:

1. Participants role play the following dialogue showing active listening and;

2. Answer the questions following the dialogue.

Teenage Son: (Coming home from school) I've had it! That's the last day I'll spend in that crazy school. I hate it, I'm not going back. I want to transfer to another school.

Dad: You hate school and want to transfer? Something there really must be bothering you. . .

Son: I can't go back. I won't go back.

Dad: You feel as if you can't face another day in those classes?

Son: Well, it's not the classes that are so bad. It's other things.

Dad: You like some of the classes then. I thought it was the teachers you couldn't stand.

Son: Well, no. Really, I like biology and history and even the rest -- they're O.K.

Dad: Well, that's a plus. I thought it was the teachers that were getting to you. You like some of your classes, but you still hate school?

Son: I guess I shouldn't say I hate <u>school</u>. Mostly it's not school itself; it's the rest of the boys. They all make fun of me for going out for drama & speech. They even hassle me in the hall.

Dad: All of the boys make fun of you?

Son: No, now that I'm talking about it, it's really only three or four. But they're the "big guys" -- they're on the football team.

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[24]Miller, op. cit., pp. 421-422.

Dad: Three or four actually "bug" you?

Son: Well, yes, -- I guess that's all really. Now that I think about it -- three or four aren't too many.

Dad: No, but I know how what even "anybody" says hurts.

Son: You know, now that I've told you about it. I feel better, I've cooled off a lot.

Dad: That's good. I know how it feels not to be able to say how you feel to someone, and I'm glad you feel better about getting it out of your system.

Son: Yeah. In fact, while you were talking I decided I'm lucky to have the friends I have. I'm just going back and face those guys. I'm sure not going to be a quitter.

Questions:

1. Did the boy get rid of his angry feeling?

_____

_____

2. Did he solve his own problem?

_____

_____

Directions: Two participants role play the above dialogue, changing the father's responses.

Questions:

1. If you were the boy, which type of response would make you feel more "accepted?"

_____

_____

CHART FOR SESSION ON ACTIVE LISTENING
DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES[25]

Child: "Do I have to go to the dentist? My stomach hurts and anyway my cavity is just a tiny one. Let's go some other time."

Lecturing:	"It's necessary for all of us to go to the dentist for check-ups and fillings. Taking care of your teeth is an important part of living."
Accusing, Shaming:	"Well, if you'd brush your teeth more often, you wouldn't have to go to the dentist."
Threatening:	"If we don't go, your tooth will have to be pulled and that will really hurt."
Ridiculing:	"You really are a baby!"
Stereotyping:	"Everybody has to go to the dentist now and then."
Advice Giving:	"Try to think of something else; then it won't seem so bad."
Cliches:	"Nobody promised you a rose garden."

Empathic Responding: "Sounds like you're concerned with what's going to happen at the dentist. You're worried that it might hurt a little."

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[25] Judith Frankel D'Augelli and Joan M. Weener, Communication and Parenting Skills, Parent Workbook, (University Park, Penna.: The Pennsylvania State University, 1977) p. 20.

CUES TO EMPATHIC RESPONDING

"Empathy is being understood from your point of view." It means that you enter another person's world and prove that you understand his feelings by reflecting back his message. "As Carl Rogers has pointed out, the empathic person is with you not to agree or disagree, but rather to understand without judgment."[26]

Non-Verbal Expressions that Say, "I'm With You."[27]

Smile	Eye contact	Winking
Hugging	Nodding head	Pat on the shoulder
Sitting on lap	Holding hands	

Words That Communicate Interest and Concern[28]

"Good"	"I agree"	"Tell me more"
"Very clever!"	"Go to it!"	"Excellent!"
"Thank you."	"Good job!"	"I'm with you."
"Great!"	"I'm proud of you."	"Groovy!"

Door Openers[29]

"Oh, really."	"Tell me about it."	"Tell me more."
"You look sad."	"Looks like you've got something to say."	"Want to talk it over?"
"Need to talk?"		
"Shoot, I'm listening."	"Oh, that's interesting."	

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[26]Dorothy Corkille Briggs, Your Child's Self-Esteem, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), p. 105.

[27]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent Workbook, p. 21.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Dr. Thomas Gordon, Parent Effectiveness Training, (New York: Wyden, 1970), p. 48.

Full Empathic Responses[30]

"It really upsets you when the kids say you're too young to play."

"Your feelings are hurt."

"You'd like to think of ways you'd be more a part of the group. How do you think you might act?"

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[30] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent Workbook, p. 21.

HOW IS YOUR CHILD FEELING?

HAPPY

ENCOURAGED

PROUD

EXCITED GLAD

REASSURED

ELATED

ENTHUSIASTIC

LOVED RELIEVED

CONFIDENT

THANKFUL

FLATTERED PLEASED

CAREFREE

NEEDED COMPETENT OVERJOYED

Your Own _____

_____

ANGRY UNLOVED

LONELY

FRUSTRATED

LEFTOUT

NERVOUS

MEAN WORRIED HURT

SCARED

DISCOURAGED

UNCOMFORTABLE SAD

FRANTIC

RESENTFUL UPSET

EMBARRASSED TROUBLED

PUZZLED

MISERABLE SORRY

Your Own _____

_____

PRACTICING EMPATHIC RESPONSES[31]

1. There's nothing to do. All the other kids are playing basketball, and they say I'm too young to play."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's Feeling Response: "You feel_____

   _____

   _____

2. "I hate Judy next door. She says I don't play hopscotch the right way and that I can't play anymore."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's Feeling Response: "You feel_____

   _____

   _____

3. "Hey, look at this airplane I built out of popsicle sticks and glue. It even flies."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel_____

   _____

   _____

4. "Can't I take this stuff down to the basement tomorrow morning? I heard funny noises down there."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel_____

   _____

   _____

---

[31] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parents Workbook, pp. 26-27.

PRACTICING EMPATHIC RESPONSES (CONT'D)

5. "Our Girl Scout meeting was really neat today! Our leader is going to take us on a campout next week. She's really nice!"

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

   _____

   _____

6. "On the TV show "Mod Squad" they showed a man who would rob houses and then sell the stuff to get money to buy drugs. Are there people like that in our town?"

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

   _____

   _____

7. "I heard some high school kids at the bus stop talking about what kinds of beer they like best. When I get older I want to drink beer with my friends, too."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

   _____

   _____

8. Ten-year old girl: "I sure wish I had some decent clothes."[32]

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

   _____

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[32]Miller, op. cit., Family Learning Center Workshops..., pp. 437-438.

PRACTICING EMPATHIC RESPONSES (CONT'D)

9. Eight-year old: "Miss Smith is always picking on me."

   Child's feeling:_____

   Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

   _____

   _____

10. Twelve-year old" "No one in the whole block has to do as much as I do."

    Child's feeling:_____

    Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

    _____

    _____

11. Five-year old: "I'm not going to school again. I'm never going to leave home."

    Child's feeling:_____

    Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

    _____

    _____

12. Eight-year old: "I don't like piano lessons anymore. I'd like to change to drums."

    Child's feeling:_____

    Parent's feeling response: "You feel _____

    _____

    _____

(Participants may role-play these situations in any way they wish...using effective or destructive responses. Other members judge as to the effectiveness of the dialogue.)

BENEFITS OF ACTIVE LISTENING[33]

Helps the sender answer his own problems. It keeps the responsibility with the child. The parent is involved but the child "Holds the ball."

Helps a child grow to maturity. As he feels he is understood, he is prompted to further talking it out.

It fosters the sender being more honest and open with you - more willing to use you as a helping agent.

Increases the sharing and exchange of ideas and feelings.

Allows the child to see that the parent cares and understands, that his views and feelings matter and are respected.

Lets the child know he is valued and trusted. This boosts self-esteem. The child grows up believing in himself.

Lets the child express feelings, helps the child get rid of feelings. When expressed, feelings can disappear or they can lessen.

Increases self-reliance in solving problems as the child knows a parent can trust him to think for himself.

Negative feelings aren't feared as a child sees that his parents can accept them.

Helps the child listen to what parents have to say. He is more willing to become a good listener himself and learns to be sensitive to the feelings of others.

If parents listen to and respect a child's thoughts, the child is more apt to listen to ideas and suggestions the parent has to offer.

It frequently fosters insights: new ways of seeing things, new attitudes, new behaviors, new understanding of self.

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[33] Adapted from:
Gordon, op. cit., pp. 56-58; Miller, op. cit., Family Learning Center Workshops..., p. 425; D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parents Workbook, pp. 15-17; Mehlville School District Family Communications: Parent Handbook, (St. Louis, Mo.: Mehlville School District, 1976) ERIC Microfiche #ED114 738.

It promotes a more intimate and warm relationship. Sender feels warm and loving toward Listener: Listener better understands Sender and feels more warm and loving toward him.

Develops a climate of acceptance, trust, respect, and growth.

Can be done as part of day-to-day experiences.

EVALUATION - HOW DID WE DO?*

NO NAME PLEASE.

Complete any of the following that you wish:

Tonight I liked _____

_____

I didn't care for _____ because

_____

_____

I learned _____

_____

I relearned _____

_____

I realized _____

_____

I was surprised _____

_____

I am aware _____

_____

I hope _____

_____

I wonder _____

_____

*A copy of this form will be used after each session.

SESSION TWO

Goals:

A Review previous lessons, concepts.

B Allow parents to share information on their success and/or failures.

C Motivate new skill.

D Present new skill - "I" messages.

E Provide opportunity to practice "I" messages.

F Discuss, clarify, refine skill.

G Provide an opportunity to enhance a feeling of being accepted - support.

H Present home activity.

Materials: Pencils, Parent Effectiveness Training by Dr. Thomas Gordon.

Procedures:

Goal A - 1) Present agree-disagree statements. Allow individuals a few minutes to mark their sheets. Then in groups of three have participants discuss and reach agreement where possible - allow 5-10 minutes (p. 38).

Goal B - 2) Encourage parents to share successes or failures of past week with their groups, then ask each group to report on their decisions on the Agree-Disagree statements. Next ask individuals to share with entire group any experiences they had during the past week as a result of practicing active listening. (Giving them a chance to share their experiences with a small group first presents less of a threat and is necessary until trust can be built up within the larger group.)

Goal C - 3) Use motivation exercise for "I" messages (p. 39).

Goal D - 4) Read first Typical Family Situation from P.E.T. p. 108. Have participants write exactly what each would say to the child in this situation.

Repeat procedure for second and third situations. Have parents look at their own responses and answer to themselves "Does your response..." (Change statements from p. 109 P.E.T. to questions).

Goal C - 5) Distribute How Not to Talk...and discuss
D (pp. 41-42).

Goal D - 6) Present lesson on "I" messages (pp. 43-45).

Goal D - 7) Distribute - Sending Non-Judgmental Messages- have participants role-play it. Then discuss with entire group (p. 46).

Goal E - 8) Distribute Practicing "I-Messages" sheets.
G Divide into groups of four. First, have each person complete the first seven practice situations individually. As each is completed, the group should discuss it and compare the "I-Messages" they have written. For the last two, have each participant get feedback from the others in the group as to what type of "I-Message" they would send (pp. 47-48).

Goal E - 9) Practice role-plays using one situation from each group and extending. If possible use volunteers from among the parents.

Goal F -10) Distribute - Guidelines for Sending "I-Messages" - Benefits of Sending an "I-Message" (pp. 49-51). Allow participants to read them through, then discuss as interest warrants.

Goal H -11) Practice sending "I-Messages" as much as possible and be prepared to share outcomes. Read "The Process of Change (pp. 52-53) at your leisure.

Goal H -12) Take a jar or bowl and label this the Family Feelings Jar. Write feeling words on separate slips of paper and place them in the container. Once a week, when the family is together, sit down around the Feelings Jar. One person draws a word from the jar. The family then discusses the following questions:

a. Did anyone in your family have that feeling this week?

b. When? What were the circumstances? (Give persons the right to "pass" if they wish by simply stating, "I pass.")

c. How does that family member feel about the situation now?

d. When the family member had that feeling, what could have happened that made him/her feel differently.[34]

13) Distribute evaluation sheets.

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[34]Glashagel, op. cit., p. 26.

AGREE-DISAGREE STATEMENTS (ACTIVE LISTENING)[35]

Directions: Read the following statements. Circle A if you agree with the statement or D if you disagree with the statement. Then form teams and do the same. If you cannot agree, change the wording so that you can possibly come to an agreement.

A D 1) Active listening is an effective means of keeping communication lines open.

A D 2) Active listening is easy.

A D 3) If we actively listen to someone, we give him a certain "freedom of space" in which he can feel free to be himself.

A D 4) If a child feels he is understood, this will "spoil" him.

A D 5) If we only listen to a child's feelings and accept what he says, we cannot change him. We must offer advice of our own.

A D 6) If statements of advice are needed, they are more readily listened to by a child if he has first been listened to with understanding.

A D 7) The above statement applies to all communication situations -- not just those between parent and child.

A D 8) Communication involves only two important factors -- the speaker and the listener.

A D 9) When communication has failed, it is usually the fault of the communicator.

A D 10) Non-verbal communication is not as important as verbal communication.

A D 11) The old saying, "Children should be seen and not heard," is still a good saying to follow.

A D 12) Sometimes silence is the best way we can "listen" to our children.

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[35]Miller, op. cit. Family Learning Center Workshops, p. 443.

MOTIVATION EXERCISE FOR LESSON ON "I MESSAGES"[36]

Directions: The workshop moderator reads the following questions, and the participants indicate their experience by raising hands; or the participants silently read the questions, and each writes in his response.

1. Have you ever been in a family discussion and felt that no one listened to you?

   _____

2. Have you ever had things said to you which you felt were unfair and unjust?

   _____

3. Have you ever felt strongly about something and neglected stating your feelings (and then felt angry at yourself for not being strong enough to say what you really felt)?

   _____

4. Do you ever feel that there is no way you can say how you feel and be understood?

   _____

5. When angry, do you feel that there is no way to really say how you feel without hurting the "other person"?

   _____

6. Have you ever felt like saying or have you ever said any of the following?

   "He turned a deaf ear!" _____

   "I can talk and talk and it does no good!" _____

   "I just can't communicate with him!"

   "No matter what I say, it doesn't do any good!" _____

---

[36]Miller, op. cit., pp. 463-464.

"There's a wall between us!" _____

"He never listens to what I say! _____

7. Do you feel that being listened to is just a matter of luck or chance?

_____

HOW NOT TO TALK[37]
(IF WE WANT TO BE LISTENED TO)

Directions: Column A lists various ways in which our talk tears someone down. Column B contains actual message illustrating the examples in Column A. Following the example shown, draw a line from the type of talk in Column A to the corresponding example in Column B.

A	B
1. By demanding the other person through threats.	1. You are lazy, lazy, lazy! Your bedroom hasn't been cleaned in a month.
2. By not taking responsibility for our feelings. By sending accusing ("you") messages.	2. I am angry because you used such poor judgment.
3. By blaming the other person for the way we feel.	3. You're going to get it when Daddy comes homes. You're in for a hard spanking when he gets back from his trip at the end of the week.
4. By not staying with the present issues and digging up past hurts.	4. Are you worrying about that! Don't be silly.
5. By making the listener feel guilty.	5. Don't you dare say what I think you're going to say.
6. By not taking the other person's feeling seriously; by sneering, laughing at, making fun of him.	6. You should be ashamed. You're such a bad, bad girl.
7. By being sarcastic.	7. One hour late! You must have been up to no good.
8. By name calling.	8. You're always interrupting. And, what's more, you don't ever do what I want, "Last week, for instance...

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[37]Miller, op. cit., pp. 477-478.

A	B
9. By not remembering COIK; Clear Only if Known.	9. Who do you think you are, Miss Junior Miss of the whole city?
10. By second-guessing what the other person is thinking.	10. Well, Mr. Achiever, another poor grade I see.

Consider: How many times was the word "You" used in Column B?_____

LESSON ON "I-MESSAGES"

Active Listening is the way you respond to your child's feeling and problems, but you have feelings and problems too. You also have the right and need to express your feelings. Children can be taught to be sensitive and respectful of parents' problems and needs. Parents can accomplish this with "I-Messages". "I-Messages" - so called because they center around the word "I", describe a situation and your feelings about that situation. "I-Messages" do not attack the other person. Begin by describing the specific behavior involved. Your negative feelings are tied to a particular behavior of the child. Describe this behavior as exactly as you can so your child knows that he/she isn't being condemned as a whole person, but that a part of his/her behavior is unacceptable. Example: If your 10 year-old is throwing dirt at the next door neighbor's child, you would begin your message with, "When I see you throwing dirt at Bobby,..." as opposed to "What's the matter with you, don't you know how to behave?" Then communicate how this behavior has made you feel. Are you feeling hopeless, mad, frustrated, nervous, depressed or irritated as a result of your child's behavior? Give a definite label to your feelings so that your child receives a clear message and you can get it out of your system rather than letting them smolder inside.

LESSON ON "I-MESSAGES" (CONT'D)

Let's see what kind of "I-Messages" could have been sent in each of the situations we mentioned previously.

Response to Situation #1 - "When I come home from work I feel so tired. I feel that I just have to sit and be by myself and do something quietly for awhile. Then I feel better and ready to play with you."

Response to Situation #2 - "I can't cook when I have to walk around pots and pans on the floor. I feel worried that I might trip or spill something."

Response to Situation #3 - "I feel discouraged because I cleaned the kitchen so it would be ready for me to start cooking dinner."

It is important to communicate your real feelings. If the parent is happy, he or she should use happy, enthusiastic feeling words. If the parent is annoyed and frustrated, accurate feeling words should be used to communicate that to the child.[38]

EXAMPLE: The seven year old is again teasing the four year old. It causes a great deal of friction and really makes the parent mad. If the parent says, "I don't like it when you tease.", it would be an understatement. It would be more accurate for the parent to let the child know the intensity of that frustration. "I get so frustrated and angry when you keep taking Susan's toys away. I wish we didn't have all this teasing and crying. Sometimes I can hardly stand it."[39]

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[38] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Leader's Guide, p. 103.

[39] Ibid.

LESSON ON "I-MESSAGES" (CONT'D)

Don't overuse the word "angry" in an "I-Message" - there are usually underlying feelings that cause the anger. Thomas Gordon says "The parent manufactures the anger as a consequence of experiencing a primary feeling." He gives some sample situations that result in anger but points out the primary feelings.

> "I am driving along on a freeway and another driver cuts in front of me precariously close to my right front fender. My primary feeling is fear, his behavior scared me..."[40]
>
> "A mother loses her child in a department store. Her primary feeling is fear - she is afraid that something unpleasant may happen to him. If someone asked her how she was feeling while she was searching for him, this mother would say "I'm scared to death" or "I feel terribly worried or frightened." When she finally finds the child she experiences great relief. To herself she says, "Thank God, you're okay." But out loud she says something quite different. Acting angry, she will send some such message as, "You naughty boy...How can you be so stupid and get separated from me?"
>
> "Child acts up in a restaurant. Parent's primary feeling is embarrassment. Secondary feeling is anger: "Stop acting like a two year old."
>
> "Child forgets it is her father's birthday and fails to say "Happy Birthday" or give him a present. Father's primary feeling is hurt. Secondary feeling is anger: "You're just like all the other thoughtless kids today."
>
> "Child brings home report card with C's and D's. Parent's primary feeling is disappointment. Secondary feeling is anger: "I know you were goofing off all semester. I hope you feel very proud of yourself."[41]

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[40] Gordon, op. cit., p. 126.

[41] Gordon, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

SENDING NON-JUDGMENTAL MESSAGES[42]

"Blame - negative judgment - is at the core of emotional disorder and low self-esteem."

"You - judgments"	"I - reactions"
"You're such a slowpoke!"	"I'm worried you'll be late for school."
"You're messy!"	"I don't want to clean up those cooky crumbs on the floor!"
"How sloppy can you get!"	"This clutter really bothers me!"
"You're a liar."	"I can't count on your words when they don't match what you do."
"You have good taste."	"I like the dress you chose."
"You dope! Don't you know any better than to play out in the street?"	"I'm so frustrated I can't stand it! I've repeatedly told you about the danger of street playing. I'm scared stiff you'll be hurt!"

"It cannot be emphasized too strongly that judgments are troublemakers."

"The secret for safety is to react but to suspend judgment."

"JUDGMENTS ARE SMOKE SCREENS THAT PREVENT LOVE FROM COMING THROUGH."

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[42]Briggs, op. cit., pp. 83-88.

PRACTICING "I-MESSAGES"

Situation 1: Your child is banging on a tin pan while you are on the phone.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message" _____

_____

Situation 2: Your 12 year old arrives 15 minutes late for dinner for the third time that week.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

Situation 3: Your 14 year old has gotten into your things (make-up, tools) and left them all over the room. You enter as he/she is leaving the room.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

Situation 4: You find your child dawdling around the family (other) room when he/she had promised to clean it up.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

Situation 5: Your ten-year old left the stove burner on.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

PRACTICING "I-MESSAGES" (CONT'D)

Situation 6: You went to a restaurant for dinner with the family. Before going, you spoke with your child about proper manners. The dinner was great and your child behaved him/herself well.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

Situation 7: You need to get a tool from the garage and when you get there you find your child and a friend smoking a cigarette.

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

YOUR OWN "I-MESSAGES" Briefly describe a situation at your house in which you think an "I-Message" would be appropriate.

_____

_____

_____

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

Situation 2: _____

_____

_____

Your feeling: _____

"I-Message": _____

_____

GUIDELINES FOR SENDING "I-MESSAGES"

1. Tag your feelings honestly. Don't overuse the word "angry". Sometimes you have to look inside yourself because the first feeling which comes to the surface may not be the primary feeling. Try to identify those feelings and communicate them. (Refer to the "Feelings" list in Session One.)

2. Describe the feeling in such a way that you take responsibility for your own feelings.

   "When I see the house in a mess, I feel upset."

3. Describe the behavior that caused your feeling, don't describe the other person. Use non-judgmental language in describing the behavior.

   "I was worried when you didn't get home."

4. Show how you feel about an issue but allow the child to take the responsibility for changing his/her behavior. The message should not evaluate or accuse. Instead it states what the annoying behavior is in specific terms.

   "I really get tired of stumbling over your boots. The boots belong in the hall closet."

   "I need to rest and have a quiet time. I can't do that when there's a lot of noise."

   "Jim, I'm having trouble concentrating on my reading when the music is so loud."

5. REMEMBER TO SEND "I-MESSAGES" FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR TOO. When you are glad for what your child is doing or when your child's behavior is causing you to experience some positive feelings.

   "I felt surprised and happy that you cleaned your room before supper. You did a great job!"

6. Use an "I-Message when you, the parent, have a feeling to express...when the child is doing something that is annoying you or interfering with you in some way.

7. WHEN CHILDREN DON'T CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR AS A RESULT OF YOUR "I-MESSAGE", but start sending back their feelings, switch to Active Listening.

GUIDELINES FOR SENDING "I"-MESSAGES" (CONT'D)

Father: "I'm upset about the supper dishes being left in the sink. Didn't we agree that you would get them done right after dinner?"

Jan: "I felt so tired after dinner because I stayed up until three a.m. doing that term paper."

Father: "You just didn't feel like doing the dishes right after dinner."

Jan: "No. So I took a nap until ten thirty. I plan to do them before I go to bed, Okay?"

Father: "Okay by me."[43]

8. "It takes a certain amount of courage to send "I-Messages",...It takes courage and inner security for a person to express his inner feelings in a relationship. The sender of an honest "I-Message" risks becoming known to the other as he really is. He is opening himself up-being "transparently real", revealing his 'human-ness'. He tells the other that he is a person capable of being hurt or embarrassed or frightened or disappointed or angry or discouraged, and so on...Parents, particularly, find it difficult to be transparently real with children because they like to be seen as infallible - without weaknesses, vulnerabilities, inadequacies. For many parents, it is much easier to hide their feeling under a 'You-Message' that puts the blame on the child rather than expose their own human-ness."[44]

9. You may not see success immediately. It takes practice to make an "I-Message" sound natural. They may sound strange to your child. They need to be practiced and heard until they become a natural part of parent-child interaction.

REMEMBER: WHEN ANGRY - STATE WHAT YOU SEE - STATE HOW YOU FEEL. BEGIN YOUR STATEMENT WITH THE WORD "I" TO AVOID ATTACKING THE OTHER PERSON VERBALLY.

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[43]Gordon, op. cit., p. 137.

[44]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

BENEFITS OF SENDING AN "I-MESSAGE"

1. It does not personally attack or criticize your child. It encourages the child's positive self-concept and integrity, while at the same time it lets the child know that he or she needs to change some behavior in order to help you solve the problem.

2. It provides the child with the opportunity to take responsibility for his/her own behavior..."I-Messages" offer the child the one opportunity to listen to the parent's needs and to be responsive on his/her own. Taking charge of one's own behavior is one of the most important ingredients in learning to become a responsible adult.[45]

3. It helps the child learn to respect and understand the feelings of others. Being able to respond to someone else's problem is part of being sensitive to others.

4. "The I-Message is much less apt to provoke resistance and rebellion. To communicate to a child honestly the effect of his behavior on <u>you</u> is far less threatening than to suggest that there is something bad about <u>him</u> because he is engaged in that behavior."[46]

5. "Because I-Messages are honest, they tend to influence a child to send similar honest messages whenever he has a feeling."

6. "Probably the greatest reward that comes to a parent from being transparent is the relationship it promotes with the child. Honesty and openness foster intimacy- a truly <u>interpersonal</u> relationship. My child gets to know me as I am, which then encourages him to reveal to me what he is. Instead of being alienated from each other, we develop a relationship - two real persons, willing to be known in our realness to each other."[47]

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[45] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., <u>Parent's Workbook</u>, p. 35.

[46] Gordon, op. cit., p. 118.

[47] Ibid., p. 120.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE[48]

It is not easy to change one's habitual mode of expressing anger. The new knowledge comes hard. It involves struggle and effort and determination. Here is how a mother described the stages in her process of change.

1. You insult your child. You think about it and it bothers you.

2. You hear yourself again making cutting comments. You listen helplessly as the words come out of you.

3. You know you are about to make an insulting remark. Still, you are unable to stop yourself. Real irritation with self sets in. You make a firm mental note to improve.

4. An annoying situation arises again. You can't use the old way. You still don't know how to use the new way. Something feeble and peculiar comes out of you.

5. You feel annoyed with yourself, and you review the situation again. You say to yourself, "I should have said..." You review it several times.

6. Now you are almost eager for a crisis to come so that you can change to your new approach. You get your chance soon enough. This time you are prepared. Though the language is new, the tone is right. Everyone is surprised. But the method is not quite part of you yet.

7. You begin to express all nuances of anger with assurances and authority, without insult or attack. This new approach is becoming part of your personality. You play it like a musician.

8. Joy, oh you; the children reflect your behavior and your words.

9. Alas, you are only human. You make mistakes. Only part of the time you have the energy to use this approach. With all your skill and good will, there are still those painful moments when nothing works, when you feel helpless and discouraged.

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[48]Haim Ginott, Between Parent and Teenager, (New York: Avon Books, Hearst Corp., 1971), pp. 108-110.

THE PROCESS OF CHANGE (CONT'D)

10. You recover. You continue to experiment and to learn. You say to yourself, "No method is perfect, but it's the best I've got."

SESSION THREE

Goals:

A. Review previous lesson.

B. Allow parents to share information on their successes and/or failures.

C. Motivation lesson on self-concept and acceptance.

D. Present lesson on self-concept and the relationship of acceptance to the development of self-esteem.

E. Give opportunity for participants to analyze behaviors and communications that may or may not promote feeling acceptance.

F. Discuss, clarify concepts.

G. Provide home activities for extension of lesson.

H. Provide activity to promote positive feelings toward family members.

Materials Needed: pencils, drawing paper or poster board, crayons, Leader's chart as described in activity 18, 100 Ways to Enhance the Self-Concept in the Classroom,[49] Liberated Parents Liberated Children.[50]

Procedures:

Goal A 1) Present agree-disagree statements (p. 57). Allow individuals a few minutes to mark their sheets. Then in groups of three or four, have participants discuss and reach agreement where possible.

Goal B 2) Encourage parents to share successes or fail-

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[49]Jack Canfield and Harold C. Wells, 100 Ways to Enhance the Self-Concept in the Classroom, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1976).

[50]Adele Faber and Elaine Maglish, Liberated Parents Liberated Children, (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1975).

ures of the past week with their groups; then ask each group to report on their decisions on the Agree-Disagree statements. Next ask individuals to share with the entire group any experiences of the past week.

Goal C 3) Tell the I.A.L.A.C. story, (p. 91 100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom).

Goal D 4) Read opening statement on self-concept (p. 58).

5) Discuss with entire group, "Can you love a child without the child knowing it?"

6) Read Brigg's statement on self-concept (pp. 58-59).

7) Discuss - Self-Concept Diagram (p. 61) and Chart (p. 62).

8) Read "Mr. Sad Sack" incident from Liberated Parents Liberated Children. (Begin p. 67 last line to p. 73, paragraph three. Then say, "More positive experiences follow, then Nell asks..." p. 75 last line to end of second paragraph p. 76).

9) Read statement on acceptance (p. 59).

10) Refer to "Climbing Steps to Emotional Development" (pp. 63-66) and say "They are for your future reference."

11) Turn to "How to Help Your Child Feel Good About Himself", (pp. 67-68). In groups of three or four, read through it.

Goal D, E 12) Have the group refer to "Communication-Acceptance or Nonacceptance" (pp. 69-70). Have each participant first mark his/her own sheet. Then discuss it within the group.

13) Read statement from Dr. Gordon on showing acceptance by non-intervention (p. 60).

Goal E 14) Fill out chart on Acceptance Behaviors (as applicable to your situation) (p. 71).

Goal F 15) With entire group, ask for questions or comments. Present Summary Sheet - TO BE READ AT PARENT'S LEISURE (p. 74).

Goal G	16)	Suggest using "Realistic Expectations" (p. 72) sheet independently at home. Announce the leader will be available to discuss it with them next week as need dictates.
	17)	Call attention "Potpourri..." (p. 73).
Goal G, H	18)	Using crayon and posters, make a chart of your family members. List positive adjectives below each name. Leader should display sample on her family previously prepared.
	19)	Distribute evaluation sheets.

AGREE-DISAGREE STATEMENTS - I MESSAGES[51]

Directions: Read each statement below. Circle either A or D according to whether you agree or disagree with the statement. This is not a true-false exercise. It is an exercise to examine your own thinking.

A D 1. The way we talk to a child will influence his entire development.

A D 2. Changing communication habits is not too difficult.

A D 3. Because we have been "programmed" into a certain way of talking to our children, we are likely to keep talking this way unless we are really determined to change and stick to that determination.

A D 4. If we have tried for two weeks to change our pattern of talking and listening and still fall back into our former methods, we might as well give up.

A D 5. We can tell if our talk has hurt or helped our child if he keeps still and doesn't argue back.

A D 6. Feelings should always be kept to oneself.

A D 7. Feelings should never be kept to oneself.

A D 8. One can be angry at another and say so without causing damage to the other person.

A D 9. Sharing feelings helps one know and understand the other. Sharing feelings requires faith and trust in the other person.

A D 10. It doesn't matter how we express our feelings in a conflict, just that we express them.

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[51]Miller, op. cit., pp. 503-504.

STATEMENT ON SELF-CONCEPT

All people from infancy to old age have the need to feel lovable and worthwhile. The fulfillment of this need is important to their living the fullest lives possible. "Studies indicate that family influence is stronger than school facilities, class size or community support. Children learn to think about themselves from the way their parents treat them, their expectations, love, and respect..."[52] The way your child feels about him/herself will effect every area of his/her life - how well he learns at home, his progress in school, how he gets along with friends, and his/her motivation to try new things. It affects everything s/he is, does, and can grow to be. It affects his personality, his ability to produce, to think, to be creative. Helping a child feel worthwhile is the most important contribution a parent can give a child.[53]

BRIGG'S STATEMENT ON SELF-CONCEPT

"...children need <u>living experiences</u> to <u>prove</u> their lovability and worth. Telling a child he is special is <u>not</u> enough. Experience is what counts. It speaks louder than

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[52]Woodard, op. cit., p. 53.

[53]Miller, op. cit., p. 28.

words. CHILDREN VALUE THEMSELVES TO THE DEGREE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN VALUED."[54]

ACCEPTANCE

We have to be aware that there are sometimes blocks to accepting our children. We have a different area of acceptance for each child. What annoys us when done by one, might not bother us when done by another. Sometimes the time of day or what has happened to us previously that day may lower our acceptance. Another problem is that without thinking, we automatically repeat things our parents said to us as children... "we mother as we were mothered". It is as though we had tape recorders inside us that trigger a "pat" response to a certain incident. "Boys don't cry." "Brothers and sisters should love each other." We must strive to be aware of these stereotype reactions - to question them and to avoid them. Dr. Gordon supported Briggs, "It is one thing for a parent to feel acceptance toward a child; it is another thing to make that acceptance felt. Unless a parent's acceptance comes through to the child, it can have no influence on him. A parent must learn to demonstrate acceptance so that a child feels it."[55]

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[54]Briggs, op. cit., p. 14.

[55]Gordon, op. cit., p. 33.

SHOWING ACCEPTANCE BY NONINTERVENTION[56]

Parents can show acceptance of a child by not intervening in his activities. Take the child who is attempting to build a castle of sand at the beach. The parent who keeps away from the child and occupies himself with activities of his own, permitting the child to make 'mistakes' or create his own unique design for a castle...that parent is sending a nonverbal message of acceptance.

The child will feel, 'What I'm doing is O.K. My castle building behavior is acceptable.'

Keeping hands off when a child is engaged in some activity is a strong nonverbal way of communicating acceptance. Many parents fail to realize how frequently they communicate nonacceptance to their children simply by interfering, intruding, moving in, checking up, joining in. Too often adults do not let their children just be. They invade the privacy of their rooms, or move into their own private and personal thoughts, refusing to permit them a separateness. Often this is a result of parental fears and anxieties, their own feeling of insecurity.

Parents want children to learn ("Here's what a castle should really look like."). They are uncomfortable when their children make a mistake. ("Build the castle farther from the water so a wave won't topple the castle wall.") They want to be proud of their children's accomplishments. ("Look at the fine castle our Jimmy made.") They impose rigid adult standards of right and wrong. ("Shouldn't your castle have a moat?") They have secret ambitions for their children. ("You're never going to learn anything, building that thing all afternoon.") They are overly concerned about what others think of their children. ("That's not as good a castle as you're capable of making.") They want to feel that their child needs them. ("Let Daddy help.") and so on.

Thus, doing nothing, in a situation when the child is engaged in an activity can communicate clearly that the parent accepts him.

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[56]Ibid., pp. 35-36.

SELF-CONCEPT DIAGRAM[57]

Development of the Child's Self-Concept

Cues from "Significant Others"		Child Behaviors
ridicule		aggression
sarcasm		indifference
annoyance		failure
rejection		withdrawal
anger		tension
distrust		hostility
impatience		fear
discouragement		guilt
		submissiveness

SENSE OF FAILURE
Negative Self-Concept

Cues from "Significant Others"		Child Behaviors
acceptance		success
concern		creativity
encouragement		achievement
security		belonging
empathy		interest
sensitivity		identification
understanding		cooperation
		curiosity

SENSE OF PERSONAL WORTH
Positive Self-Concept

57D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Leader Guide, p. 79.

CHART

IF A CHILD DOES NOT FIND A SENSE OF SELF-WORTH IN A SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE MANNER, HE CAN TRY TO FIND IT IN SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE OR SELF-DEFEATING WAYS.

Not finding a
sense of self-worth...

WHO AM I?

WHAT AM I?

...can result in...

low self-image

neurosis

anxiety

making impossible demands on self

wearing "masks"

thinking "I don't count"

trying to get acceptance from rudeness, bossiness, etc.

developing poor relationships with others

CLIMBING THE STEPS TO EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT[58]

Directions: Read the following "REMEMBER" statements very carefully. Then read Characteristics of Various Growth Steps which follow:

> REMEMBER: KNOWING THE VARIOUS STEPS IN A CHILD'S GROWTH CAN HELP US DEAL WITH HIM. AS WE KNOW WHAT AND WHEN TO EXPECT, WE CAN BE MORE PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING.

> REMEMBER: THE WAY A CHILD CLIMBS THESE STEPS MIGHT DIFFER BECAUSE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ARE NOT THE SAME FOR ALL CHILDREN.

> REMEMBER: EACH CHILD HAS TO CLIMB ALL OF THESE STEPS TO GET TO THE TOP. HOWEVER, SOME CHILDREN MIGHT NORMALLY BE A LITTLE AHEAD OR A LITTLE BEHIND THE BEHAVIOR INDICATED IN A PARTICULAR AGE GROUP BELOW.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VARIOUS GROWTH STEPS

GROWTH OF FIVE YEAR OLD

1. Finds mother is center of life.
2. Is able to take responsibility for actions and knows difference between right and wrong.
3. Show the beginning of tendency toward independence.
4. May suck thumb or bite nails as emotional outlet.
5. Shows serious and businesslike appearance.
6. Is proud of clothes and possessions.
7. Becomes excited over future happenings.
8. May cry if tired or angry.
9. Has occasional temper tantrums.
10. Shows less fear of animals. Fears natural phenomenom.

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[58]Miller, op. cit., pp. 172-175.

SIX YEAR OLD

1) Shows extremes in behavior. Laughs and cries easily. Is loving one moment and hostile the next.
2) Seeks independence but fears when receives it.
3) Argues quite easily.
4) Begins to go to unstable level.
5) Imitates older group and sees no wrong in his imitations.
6) Becomes a less cooperative member of the family. May rebel and leave home.
7) Is not confident of physical skills.
8) Becomes discouraged easily.
9) Dislikes criticism but needs praise, encouragement, and understanding.
10) Identifies with older children.

SEVEN YEAR OLD

1) Develops more serious and thoughtful tones. More inhibited, more controlled in his actions.
2) Is more aware of others and relationships to others. Does not worry about others -- only about himself.
3) Will sulk when scolded and play by himself if friend will not suit.
4) Is better at losing but still likes to win. Often sets goals too high to accomplish.
5) Takes on new meaning of time and space.
6) Is aware of body and often sensitive about exposing it.
7) Is ashamed to be seen crying.
8) Feels need for responsibility.
9) Reflects feelings determined by approval of adults.
10) Changes his mind about things.
11) Writes so he can erase.

EIGHT YEAR OLD

1) Is less likely to withdraw into self.
2) Likes to argue.
3) Is aware of mistakes of others.
4) Develops a scale of moral values.
5) Anticipates future with great excitement.
6) Develops a conscience that governs behavior.
7) May go from one extreme to another.
8) Shows more prominent sex role.
9) Has developed awareness of feelings of others.

10) Sets unattainable goals.
11) Might release tension by sucking thumb.
12) Cries when under severe tension or when tired.
13) Can develop a stomach ache when upset.
14) Tells people off rather than fight.

NINE YEAR OLD

1) Fights to let off steam or becomes moody.
2) Becomes more independent and responsible.
3) Shows extreme emotional shifts.
4) Evaluates own behavior and may be ashamed of past behavior.
5) Enjoys competition.
6) Is loyal to friend.
7) Enjoys humor. Tells funny story over and over.
8) Cries when angry or if tired.
9) Worries about school failure.
10) Has scary dreams about being hurt.
11) Likes to tell about dreams.
12) May develop crushes on others.
13) Is sensitive to correction by elder.
14) Is self-conscious about himself.
15) Reacts against wishes of neatness (boys).
16) Patterns interest after father (boys).
17) Likes or despises teacher.
18) Can take blame for wrong (some).
19) Responds well to compliments.

TEN YEAR OLD

1) Understands the physical and emotional changes to come.
2) Programs needed for activity for puberty.
3) Wants warm affection in adults.
4) Won't admit fears or worries to others.
5) Is critical of parents and adults.
6) Is conscious of parents and adults.
7) Shows tendency to hero-worship.
8) Accepts body and health rules.
9) Does not take self quite as seriously as at nine.
10) Needs sense of belonging and acceptance by peers.
11) Talks back.
12) Sees only part of himself that is exposed.
13) Shows increase in finger to mouth activity.
14) Finds eating is tensional outlet (many children).
15) Overanxious. Tries his best but does not make it.

ELEVEN YEAR OLD

1) May develop ties.
2) Is confiding and alert. Aware of disposition but cannot name reason for it.
3) Aware of faults. Likes to argue.
4) Shows outbursts when angry.
5) Has good control of conscience.
6) Cries easily when upset.
7) Is jealous of siblings of same age.
8) Is fearful and seeks companionship.

TWELVE YEAR OLD

1) Causes problems as a result of attempts to gain independence.
2) Physical changes bring about a number of serious emotional problems.
3) Cries but tries to hold back the tears.
4) Worries about school work.
5) Is more aware of feelings of others and is not hurt as easily.
6) Begins to calm down and organize his energies.
7) Either hates or loves depending upon the situation.
8) May have fears but is less jealous of peers and siblings.
9) Shows smoothing out of actions.
10) Is carried away with certain topics, i.e., atom bombs, space travel.
11) Has great sense of humor.
12) Is envious of possessions of others.
13) Shows verbal response to situations rather than fighting.
14) Is sensitive about home and family.
15) Is influenced by adults and confused by them. Becomes sentimental.

THIRTEEN YEAR OLD

1) Thinks status of group is quite important.
2) Wants to be treated like an adult, but is not yet capable of handling the responsibility.
3) Desires attention and will revert to almost anything to gain it.
4) Develops crushes on older persons of opposite sex.
5) Does not understand changes in friends, especially if he is behind in development.
6) Thinks status with peers more important than adults.
7) Friendships tend to shift rapidly.

HOW TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF[59]

TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL INSECURE	TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL SAFE AND WORTHWHILE
1) Continually judge the child. Scold, blame and criticize him a lot. Always show him how wrong he is and how right you are. When he speaks up, put him down. Remind him of his ignorance, inexperience, and proneness to error.	1) Play down personalities. Discuss specific problems with the child. No matter whether the child is right or wrong, experienced or inexperience, he's still a VIP (Very Important Person) and always worth listening to.
2) Seek to control by applying pressure. Try to stop, start or change the child. Manipulate or use force in getting the child to see things your way. After all you're the "Boss".	2) Invite the child to share responsibility for solving problems. Work together to improve conditions. Avoid trying to impress the child of your greatest knowledge, rightness, or general superiority.
3) Be detached, disinterested, indifferent. Have little concern or respect for the child. If the child balks at seeing things your way, simply don't care. Be a neutral, cool cat.	3) Show real interest in the child and his viewpoint. Respect him and his opinion. Care about the outcome of your discussion. Help the child be right instead of proving him wrong.
4) Use tricks and maneuvers to get your way. Hide your real purpose. Think it's O.K., to use deceit or to "snow" the child to get your way. Bribing is a swell gimmick, too.	4) Be open about your aims. Be spontaneous instead of sneaky. Frankly admit what's in it for you. Negotiate and compromise if it's called for.

[59]Miller, op. cit., pp. 323-324.

HOW TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL GOOD ABOUT HIMSELF (CONT'D)

TO HELP THE CHILD FEE INSECURE	TO HELP THE CHILD FEEL SAFE AND WORTHWHILE
5) Flaunt your superior size and/or wisdom. Use your position to browbeat, frighten, intimidate and subdue the smaller child. Never let the child have a say in what's going on. After all, he hasn't lived, and you have.	5) Show the child he is an equal -- O.K. as a person. How? By respecting his views, feelings, opinions. Make suggestions but refrain from ordered commands and demands. Use peaceful persuasion instead of trying to dominate and coerce.
6) Be dogmatic, utterly, certain of your divine rightness. Stubbornly withhold offers to compromise, stick to your guns. Be the final authority on everything. You know it All!	6) Offer your views as flexible and only tentative. You could be mistaken. You are willing to change your mind in the face of other evidence, and you welcome it.

Adapted from material from and used by permission of Parent Education Association, Columbia, Mo. Based on research by Dr. Jack Gibb.

COMMUNICATION-ACCEPTANCE OR NONACCEPTANCE[60]

Participants alternate in reading the following statements aloud. Before each write how you would feel if each of these messages were said to you. ("O.K. or "Not O.K.")

____ 1) "I'll clean the bathroom. You just run out and play."

____ 2) "Hurry up...hurry up...let me do it...I don't have all day."

____ 3) "Get your hands away from your face. Stop fidgeting, listen to what I'm saying, can you?"

____ 4) "I really am glad that you are helping me dry the dishes."

____ 5) "You can take off the silverware, but let Aunt Betty take off the dishes because they are my best dishes and she can reach the table better. When you are four, you'll be able to reach the dishes more easily and I like someone to get the silverware for me."

____ 6) "No you don't have to get on the honor roll just because Dan did. Just do the best you can."

____ 7) "Your lazy just like your Aunt Sally."

____ 8) "You'll never grow up to be any good."

____ 9) "You say you wish you were Jane Brown because she has such pretty clothes. If you had to trade everything you are for everything Jane is, would you trade everything or be yourself?"

____10) "Let's have a Christmas program and put it on tape to send to Grandma. Each can do what he wants to. Now Jack can play the piano better than anyone else, so he can play the piano. Joe can sing better, so he can sing, and Mary how about reciting that Christmas poem. You do that so well."

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[60]Miller, op. cit., p. 40.

____11) "You can try out for football, but I'll worry every minute."

____12) "Yes it's O.K. to go over to Mary's house but I'd rather you didn't make it a habit."

____13) "What are you looking in the mirror all of the time for? Do you think you're beautiful or something?"

ACCEPTANCE BEHAVIORS[61]

What makes me feel accepted.	Ways to help an infant feel accepted.	Ways to help a young child feel accepted.	Ways to help a teenager feel accepted.

[61] Miller, op. cit., p. 42.

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

"CHILDREN RARELY QUESTION OUR EXPECTATIONS; INSTEAD THEY QUESTION THEIR PERSONAL ADEQUACY."[62]

"During the next few days, observe your behavior toward each child. Try to identify your expectations. Write each one down and look at it in the light of these questions:

Why do I have this expectation?

Where did it come from?

What's in it for me?

Is it based on my needs or my child's?

What purpose does it serve?

Does it realistically fit this particular child at this age and with this temperament and background?"[63]

IF OUR GOALS FOR CHILDREN ARE SET TOO HIGH AND UNREALISTICALLY, CHILDREN WILL FEEL FRUSTRATED IF THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO REACH THEM. IF THEY BECOME FRUSTRATED, THEY CAN TEND TO AVOID TRYING NEW THINGS AT WHICH THEY MIGHT FAIL.

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[62]Briggs, op. cit., p. 49.

[63]Ibid., p. 53.

A POTPOURRI OF HOME ACTIVITIES INTENDED TO PROMOTE THAT "I.A.L.A.C." FEELING

Make a family mobile - one sheet of oaktag for each family member. For a week each person puts positive words to describe the other persons on their chart. At the end of the week, assemble and display.

The following suggestions are from Dr. S. L. Woodard:[64]

Have your child make a list of the things she does well, enjoys doing, and is proud of having done. Draw up a list that begins, "I like myself because..."

Have a family sharing time - a special time set aside to have fun together.

Maintain a family scrapbook and/or album.

Talk with your child about his/her heroes. What do they like about them? What would they like to imitate?

Spotlight one member of the family once a week...everyone asks that person questions and gives that person their undivided attention during dinnertime.

Set aside an area to post drawings, papers, achievement indicators, etc. - anything a family member is proud of.

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[64]Woodard, op. cit., pp. 56-58.

SUMMARY

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with fear, he learns to be apprehensive.

If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to be ashamed of himself.

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative.

If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with recognition, he learns to have a goal.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns to value justice.

If a child lives with honesty, he learns to value truth.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself and others.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

AUTHOR - UNKNOWN

SESSION FOUR

Goals:

A Review previous lesson and its concepts.

B Allow participants time to share information on their successes and/or failures.

C Present lesson on problem prevention and problem solving through decision making.

D Practice skill.

E Discuss and clarify skill.

F Support activity.

Materials: Pencils, paper.

Procedures:

Goal A 1) Present agree-disagree statements on self-concept (pp. 79-80). Allow individuals a few minutes to mark their sheets. Then in groups of three, have participants discuss and reach agreement where possible.

Goal B 2) Encourage parents to share their successes or failures of the past week. Then ask each group to report on their decisions on the agree-disagree statements. Next ask if any individuals wish to share an experience from the past week with the entire group.

Goal C 3) Present lesson on problem prevention and problem solving. Include discussion of Chart A, Decision-making Flow Chart, and the Planning Process (pp. 81-83).

4) Work through Practice Worksheet for Decision Making with entire group (p. 84).

Goal D 5) Divide into groups of 3 or 4 and work through practice situation #1. Then choose one of the other situations to work through (p. 85).

6) Ask participants to volunteer a problem situation from personal experience and role-play the experience before entire group.

Goal E

7) Have each group report their conclusions to the various situations offered. Discuss and answer questions as necessary. Try to draw answers to questions from the group members themselves. Encourage use of skill at home.

Goal F

8) Appreciation Whip - With entire group have each participant complete the sentence, "I appreciate..." Anyone may exercise the "pass" option. The whip may go in order around the circle or participants may offer randomly. Leader could begin perhaps, with several statements to set the tone.

9) Suggest this as a dinnertime activity at home.

10) Call attention to Summary of Session Four sheet (p. 86) and tell participants that is for reference and reinforcement.

LESSON ON PROBLEM PREVENTION AND PROBLEM SOLVING[66]

At this session we will try to add to our skills for the purpose of preventing problems and dealing with problems that do arise through a decision-making process. Learning to anticipate problem situations and decide on solutions even before the problem makes itself apparent, is a valuable ability. You have done things like this yourself when you have kept chemicals out of the reach of young children or put a gate at the top of a stairway when your children were infants. Some sample problems and prevention plans are provided on Chart A. (Discuss with the group).

I am going to present a definite step-by-step method for working through problems with your children. Depending on the problem, the situation, and your particular child you can include the child in any or all steps. Children should be included as much as possible. The more the child is a part of the planning process, the more willing s/he will be to implement it and make it succeed. Before we try it out, I want to explain some of the terms on the Decision-Making Flow Chart.

Environmental Control involves planning how to change the surroundings to encourage certain behavior...becoming more sensitive to how the home can be adapted to better meet the

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[66] Adapted from, D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent Guide, Unit III.

child's needs as well as the adults. Examples: putting coat hooks low enough for children to reach, providing ample shelves to put away books, games, etc. If your child isn't doing homework, perhaps s/he needs a better place to work - a desk, ample light, necessary supplies, quiet.

Advance Planning - Think through the problem with the child and decide on what can be done. Refer to the Planning Process Sheet. (Discuss) The agreements have to be clearly spelled out so that both child and parent know and can remember what is expected.

Planning Alternatives - This involves having alternative activities available when boredom, frustration, or disappointment are likely to occur or in order to "head off" a potential problem.

Examples: on a long car trip, have games or books available.

planning other activities in case the planned one falls through.

offering a variety of household chores so everyone can choose what they would like to do.

Now let's look at the flow chart and discuss it.

AGREE-DISAGREE STATEMENTS (SELF-CONCEPT)[65]

Directions: Read each statement. Circle either A or D if you agree or disagree with each statement. Then work in pairs and do the same thing. If you cannot come to an agreement, change the wording in any statement enough so that you can possibly come to an agreement.

A D 1. A child who does not receive proper affection and a sense of self-worth from home will always accomplish less than he might have accomplished.

A D 2. For a teenager, the pressures of associates and friends is more important than the influence of parents.

A D 3. The need of love and the need to feel worthwhile are with some people from the day they are born until the day they die.

A D 4. One positive experience of a child will very likely balance one negative experience.

A D 5. If a child has a low self-esteem when he begins school, the damage will be corrected by teachers.

A D 6. It is easy to understand our children.

A D 7. Relying on instincts in raising children is better than getting ideas for help from advice of experts.

A D 8. An expert parent is one whose child shows a great deal of self-confidence.

A D 9. Self-acceptance in a child is built by sometimes giving in to his wishes.

A D 10. A child who has a good sense of self-worth always feels good about himself.

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[65] Miller, op. cit., p. 72.

A D 11. Telling a child "I love you" continually will give him a sense of feeling loved.

A D 12. A child can feel loved without telling him you love him.

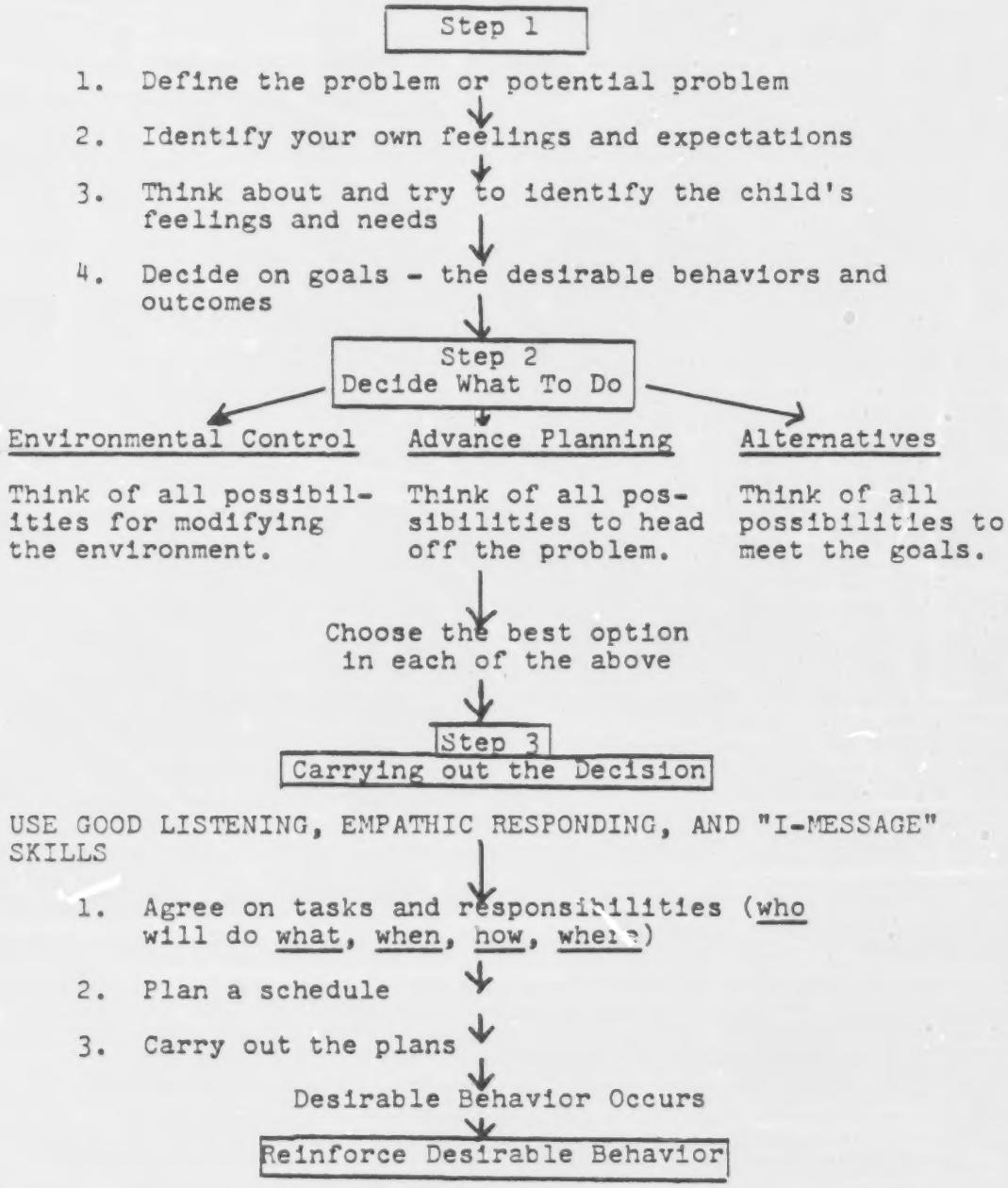
Discuss: Entire worksheet.

CHART A[67]

Potential or Actual Problem	Prevention Plan
1) Child regularly comes to table with dirty hands.	Discussion with child and agreement with child: dirty hands - no food. First step to meals-bathroom. A new towel will be provided, chosen by the child.
2) Eight year old collects stamps - they are laying all over.	Provide a special box for stamps. Agree on a place where the box will be kept.
3) Child loses milk money.	Provide a small coin purse with child's name on it.
4) Child doesn't come home at times specified.	Provide inexpensive watch.
5) Child watches too much T.V.	Agree on which programs to watch. Write a schedule for child naming each program, time, and channel.
6) Child's room is a mess-- Child should take responsibility for cleaning it.	Provide <u>specific</u> list of cleaning tasks: dirty clothes in hamper; all toys in the box or on shelves; dust the dressers and window sills; vacuum the floor and under the bed.

[67] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., <u>Parent Guide</u>, p. 49.

DECISION-MAKING FLOW CHART[68]


Step 1
1. Define the problem or potential problem
2. Identify your own feelings and expectations
3. Think about and try to identify the child's feelings and needs
4. Decide on goals - the desirable behaviors and outcomes
Step 2
Decide What To Do
Environmental Control
Think of all possibilities for modifying the environment.
Advance Planning
Think of all possibilities to head off the problem.
Alternatives
Think of all possibilities to meet the goals.
Choose the best option in each of the above
Step 3
Carrying out the Decision
USE GOOD LISTENING, EMPATHIC RESPONDING, AND "I-MESSAGE" SKILLS
1. Agree on tasks and responsibilities (who will do what, when, how, where)
2. Plan a schedule
3. Carry out the plans
Desirable Behavior Occurs
Reinforce Desirable Behavior

[68]Ibid., p. 53.

THE PLANNING PROCESS (DECISION-MAKING)[69]

Guidelines:

A. IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVES

What might we do to work out our problem?

What else could we do?

Can you think of another thing we could try?

B. IDENTIFY LIKELY CONSEQUENCES

What might happen if we tried option 1?

What do you think the outcomes would be?

What else might happen?

C. CLARIFY GOALS AND VALUES

What is important to us in making this decision?

What do we want most to happen?

Advantages:

1. Helps to head off a potential problem that could be unpleasant.
2. Helps to constructively cope with an existing problem.
3. Allows for the child to be included in the discussion and decision making about the problem.
4. Provides opportunities for the child to take responsibility for helping to make family life successful.
5. Helps give the child training in decision making skills, an important part of adult life.
6. Fits appropriately with the Active Listening and "I-Message skills. All the skills complement one another and should be used together as appropriate.

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[69]Ibid., p. 50.

PRACTICE WORKSHEET FOR DECISION MAKING[70]

Situation: It is report card time and you expect your child may have a couple of poor grades to deal with. How will you get ready to handle the situation most constructively if it arises? It will be a touchy situation for both of you. What will you say to your child and what might you want to suggest to identify problems?

Immediate Problem:

Your feelings:

Child's feelings:

Goals:

What I'd want to say:

What I'd want to suggest:

---

[70]Ibid., p. 79.

PRACTICE SITUATIONS FOR DECISION-MAKING

Apply steps in flow chart.

SITUATION 1: Bob, age 11, has trouble waking up. He never seems to hear his mother call him in the morning.[71]

Step 1:

Problem: _____

Own feelings: _____

Bob's feelings: _____

Goals: _____

Step 2: Deciding What to Do.

Environmental Control: _____

Planning Alternatives: _____

_____

Advance Planning: _____

_____

SITUATION 2: Sally, age 12, continues to leave her clothes and toys all over the bedroom. When her parents ask her to be more faithful about keeping up her room, she replies that there is no place to put anything. She may be right.[72]

(WORK THROUGH STEPS ON FLOW CHART)

SITUATION 3: Jim, age 13, has an appetite that never seems to be satisfied and he eats things that you want to save for later needs or guests.[73]

SITUATION 4: It is time for John, age 8 to go on his first visit to the eye doctor. He has been resistent to doctors, in general, and puts up a fuss.[74]

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[71] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Leader Guide, p. 130.

[72] Ibid., p. 131.

[73] Ibid., p. 134.

[74] Ibid., p. 135.

SUMMARY OF SESSION FOUR[75]

A. Children's behaviors are often shaped and structured by their environment, that is by the way their home, schoolroom, and play areas are set up and by the ways other people act toward them.

B. Children will be motivated to behave in desirable ways if the environment is designed to encourage and make it easier for them to behave in desirable ways, and especially if they are involved in the decision-making process.

C. Parents can and should try to anticipate problems and make decisions about how to structure the situation or event to either prevent a foreseeable problem or to resolve an already experienced problem.

D. Through advanced decision-making, parents can promote positive behaviors as well by deciding what behaviors they would like to encourage and how they can plan the situation to shape the child's behavior: in many cases the child can be involved in how to proceed.

E. Including the child in the decision-making and planning is desirable and useful, both because the child will be more willing to carry out the decisions...and also because he or she will be learning decision-making skills.

F. When the behavior occurs, the parent should be sure to acknowledge it through praise, encouragement, or giving "I-Messages". If not acknowledged, the child is likely to think that the parent does not care or has different expectations.

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[75]Ibid., p. 122.

SESSION FIVE

Goals:

A Allow participants time to share their experiences of the week.

B Present lesson on positive guidance (constructive discipline).

C Practice skills.

D Discuss and clarify skills.

E Feedback and discussion of entire course.

F Support activity.

Materials: Pencils, paper, chart.

Lesson Plan

Goal A 1) Participants share experiences with entire group on their successes and/or failure using the Decision-Making Flow Chart.

Goal B 2) Introduce concept of Positive Guidance which includes the skills of logical consequences, rule-making, and encouragement.

3) Present the lesson on logical consequences and use the chart in the discussion (pp. 89-90, 93).

4) Read through the Rule-making Guidelines with the group and discuss the Sample Progress Charts (pp. 94-95).

Goal B,C 5) In groups of three work through the Rule-making Practice Sheet. Then discuss with entire group as need and interest warrant (p. 96).

Goal B 6) Present lesson on encouragement (pp. 91-92).

7) Review the Nine Problem Solving skills using the diagram (p. 97).

Goal B,C 8) In groups of three, work through the Practicing Positive Guidance Pages. Encourage each group of three to work with each member in solving problem. (pp. 98-99).

Goal D 9) Discuss with entire group as need and interest warrant.

Goal D 10) Present Summary sheet - tell participants this is for their future reference. (pp. 100-101)

Goal E,F 11) With entire group, do a whip where each person gives feedback to someone else in the group.

12) Repeat whip with each participant stating what s/he felt was most valuable for him/her or relating greatest success to date as a result of the course.

13) Leader's closing statement. (Not included here). The author feels this should be a personal statement related to and tailored to the particular group of participants.

14) Written feedback forms to be completed.

This session will deal with Positive Guidance which incorporates three skills: Logical consequences, rule-making, and encouragement.

Lesson on Logical Consequences[76]

Logical Consequences are the result of the child's own actions. Allowing the child to experience the logical result of his/her behavior is an effective teaching strategy. This method gives the child opportunities to take responsibility for his/her own behavior. If s/he forgets to put dirty clothes in the hamper, the logical consequence is that the clothes do not get washed and there are no clean clothes to wear. The child learns appropriate behavior by seeing that there is a connection between what s/he does and the results from what s/he does. The word "consequences" does not imply negative outcomes but rather natural results or outcomes, either positive or negative...or mixed. Let's look at the chart.

Allowing the child to experience these consequences of behavior teaches the child about the real world. Nonlogical punishments -- such as spanking for not sharing a toy, or threatening that the child will not be allowed to watch TV if the bike isn't put away - confuse the issues by not being logically related to the inappropriate behavior.

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[76]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent's Workbook, Unit III B.

The key to logical consequences is to discuss with the child beforehand how you expect him/her to behave, the steps s/he can take to carry that out, and the logical consequences -- the results -- of doing or not doing it. Being clear and realistic about what the child can actually do is extremely important in using this method.

Logical consequences are easier to understand than to put into practice. Parents often tend to take care of things that frequently should be the child's responsibility ...picking up dirty clothes, telling a 12 year old when it's time to leave for school, etc. THE PARENT'S URGE TO HELP, TO INTERVENE, TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM, MUST, TO A LARGE EXTENT, BE HELD IN CHECK. Lots of will power and determination are necessary to carry out positive guidance.

Mistakes will be made. Problems will occur. Your child will not always choose to act in the most desirable way. Instead of saying "I told you so", allow the child to experience the logical consequences. With a more serious problem, it is a good idea to discuss the alternatives again afterwards. With less serious ones, it is likely that the child will shortly choose the positive alternatives.

Logical consequences should not be used when there is a health or safety factor to the child or others. Then a rule about the behavior is needed. Rules should be kept to a minimu, must be stated positively and clearly, and be consistently enforced. Examples:

"The rule is that you may ride your bicycle on the sidewalks but not in the street. You must tell me where you are going before you go riding." Encouragement and praise for following the rule must be consistently given.

If the logical consequence is not meaningful to the child, this is another time a rule must be imposed. If the child doesn't care about doing well in school, then the logical consequence - doing poorly, will not be an incentive to change behavior. "Do your homework first, then you may play."

WHEN THE CHILD DOES CARRY OUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS, BE SURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT.

Lesson on Encouragement

Encouragement means reinforcing the behaviors that you want to be continued. Through this the child begins to understand what is important to repeat and what to avoid. It means being supportive to your child in whatever way is appropriate. Perhaps the most important encouraging message is letting the child know that s/he is accepted and acceptable regardless of success or failure. The behavior may not be desireable but the child, as a person, is always loved.

Having realistic expectations, not demanding too much at once, and making the most of a child's assets and strengths are important to success in achieving desirable

behavior.[77] (PARENTS UNIT 5)

A word of caution about praise: Describe the task or the behavior, but not the child or his personality. This insures realistic praise. Sweeping general statements about the child's personality may be threatening. "You are such a wonderful child." He may feel that he is far from wonderful and that he is unable to live up to this label. .. It is embarassing for a person to be told that he is wonderful, angelic...He feels called upon to deny at least a part of the praise...He may not only reject the praise but may have some second thoughts about those who have praised him. "If they find me so great, they cannot be so smart."[78]

Sample:

Helpful: Jane, you really have been a help to me. You did a fine job of putting the silverware away. Everything is in its proper place and the drawer looks so neat.

Harmful: Jane, you're always such an angel.

Once you are sure your child understands the rule, you will impose the consequences if the rule is broken.

Now let's look at the Guidelines for rule making.

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Haim Ginott, Between Parent and Child, (New York: Avon Books, Hearst Corp., 1965), p. 47.

MODEL FOR LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES CHART
TO BE USED WITH SESSION 5[79]

BEHAVIOR	LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE
Child learns spelling words	Gets an A on spelling test
Child does not study spelling	Gets a D on spelling test
Child comes home on time for dinner	Gets to eat dinner
Child comes home late for dinner	Goes without dinner or gets a cold dinner
Child returns library book on time	Gets to take out more books
Child returns book late	Pays fine out of allowance
Child spends all of allowance on baseball cards and candy	Child has no money for another item s/he wants very much
Child saves money	Child gets to buy the item s/he wants

[79]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent's Workbook, p. 64.

RULE-MAKING GUIDELINES

Rules should be:

CLEAR - Rules should state the behavior you wish to see and the consequences that will result. Consequences should be reinforcing.

POSITIVE - Rules should state the behavior you wish to see, not the behavior you do not wish to see.

SPECIFIC - State the exact behavior you wish accomplished. Do not give broad, general directions.[80]

ENFORCEABLE - A rule must have a consequence which will follow if the rule is broken.

> Example 1: A child forgets to put the family records away. The rule is that the records must be replaced after playing them. It is enforced by taking away the record playing privilege for a given period of time. This is not a punishment, but rather the logical result of not following an important rule.[81]

> Example 2: These are your jobs for the week: taking out garbage, making your bed, setting the table and cleaning your room once a week. The once-a-week cleaning should include sweeping the floor, dusting everything including the pictures and the windowsills, and changing the bedding. I've made a chart to remind you of them and you can check them off as you do them.

Discuss the rules with the child beforehand. Be sure the child understands the rule, your expectations, and the consequences when the expectations are or are not met.

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[80] Miller, op. cit., p. 360.

[81] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent's Workbook, p. 67.

SAMPLE PROGRESS CHARTS

DAILY TASKS	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
Making bed							
Taking out garbage							
Setting table							
Practicing piano							

WEEKLY TASK: DATE:
Cleaning Room - Checklist:

Sweep floor							
Dust furniture							
Dust windowsills							
Put books and games on shelves.							
Clothing in hamper, drawers, closet							
Change bedding							

"Seeing a checklist of progress helps a child see just what s/he has accomplished. These external signs can help him/her feel good about him/herself."[82]

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[82]Miller, op. cit., pp. 356-357.

RULE-MAKING PRACTICE SHEET[83]

Read the following rules. Change those which do not meet the Rule-making Guidelines.

1) Not specific and enforceable. "Just do a good job. That's all. (It might seem like a "good job" to the person doing it. What is a good job?)

_____

_____

2) Not positive. "If you don't do your daily chores, you can't use the telephone."

_____

_____

3) Not specific. "Be a good girl, and you can go out to play." ("What do you mean by "being a good girl"?)

_____

_____

4) Not clear-Not specific. "Sometime, we'll go shopping for new clothes now that you've shown me you are such a responsible person."

_____

_____

5) O.K. Rule. "When you finish practicing your piano lessons, you can play baseball until supper time."

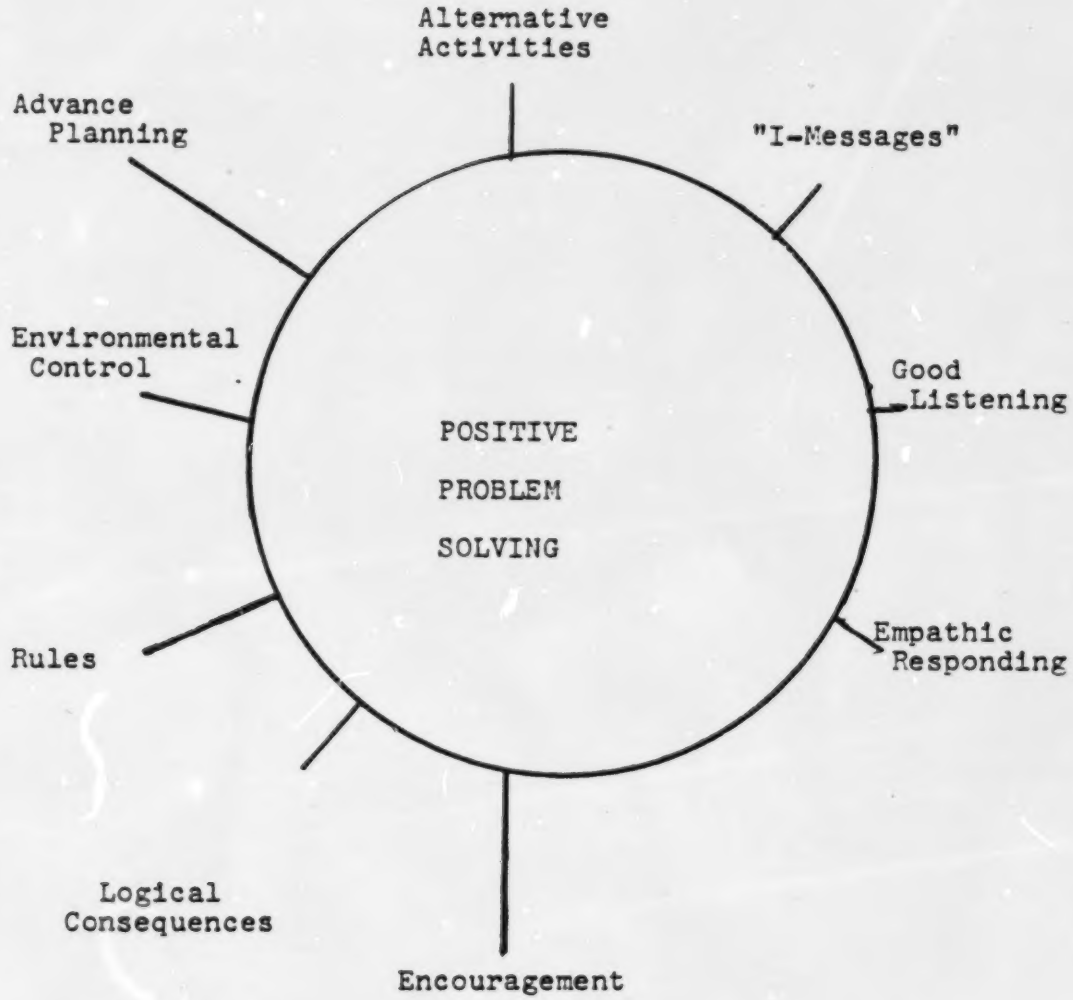
6) Negative. "You can't play baseball until you have finished your piano lesson."

_____

_____

[83]Ibid., pp. 360-361.

NINE PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS[84]



One single skill is often not adequate.

Parents can use several skills in combination to solve problems.

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[84]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Leader's Guide, p. 151.

PRACTICING POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Read each example. Then write what you would do to let the child experience the logical consequence of his actions.

1) John, fourteen, goes to high school three miles away from home. You drive him to school and pick him up. For the third time in two weeks, he phones you that he has forgotten something. This time it's his term paper that is due today. If it isn't in, his grade will go down one entire grade from A to B, or B to C.

Undesirable behavior_____

Desirable behavior_____

What I would do_____

_____

2) Linda and Jackie, ages 11 and 9, are arguing over what to watch on T.V. Each one keeps turning the channel back to what she wants to watch. It is not only hard on everybody's ears and nerves but on the T.V. set as well.

Undesirable behavior_____

Desirable behavior_____

What I would do_____

_____

3) Jack, age 10, never gets his homework done although he 'stays in his room' long enough to do it. The teacher calls from school telling you that she had to keep him after school 5 nights the past two weeks to see that his work was made up.

Undesirable behavior _____

Desirable behavior_____

What I would do_____

_____

PRACTICING POSITIVE GUIDANCE (CONT'D)

4) Choose a problem that you are having with your own child that you think might be resolved through the use of positive guidance.

Describe the problem_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Solving a problem with your child usually requires a combination of the skills you have learned. Write out your solution based on the skills you have learned.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SUMMARY - LESSON FIVE

Positive guidance means disciplining a child through teaching what is right, preferable, and appropriate by means of making expectations realistic and clear, guiding the child to make constructive decisions. The child is then allowed to experience the logical consequences of those decisions.

Positive guidance is based on the belief that each person can be and is responsible for his/her behavior.

Discipline means teaching and learning, not punishing.

Punishment involves arbitrary, unrelated consequences imposed by the parents with the goal of pointing out what was wrong. It may have the effect of stopping the behavior for a moment, but seldom prevents the behavior from recurring because it does not provide a guide to more appropriate behavior. In addition, punishment builds resentment and anger.

Logical consequences are what happens as a direct result of one's own behavior; logical consequences can be positive, such as getting a warm hug after telling someone you love him, or negative, such as a cold dinner if the child comes home later than agreed upon.[86]

The child learns appropriate behavior by seeing that there is a connection between what s/he does and the results from what s/he does.

The key to logical consequences is to discuss with the child beforehand how you expect him/her to behave and the results of doing or not doing it.

Be clear and realistic about what the child can actually do.

HOLD BACK ON YOUR PARENTAL URGE TO HELP, INTERVENE, OR SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

Do not use logical consequences when health or safety are involved, or when a logical consequence is not meaningful to the child. Then rules are needed.

Rules should be CLEAR, SPECIFIC, POSITIVE, ENFORCEABLE. They should be kept to a minimum.

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[86]D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Leader's Guide, pp. 140-143.

SUMMARY - LESSON FIVE (CONT'D)

Once you are sure your child understands the rule, impose the consequence if it is broken.[87]

WHEN THE CHILD DOES CARRY OUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS, BE SURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT.

Encouragement is positive support given to the child when the desired behavior occurs or when small but appropriate steps towards the desired behavior occur; receiving encouragement for appropriate behavior is a positive logical consequence.

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[87] D'Augelli and Weener, op. cit., Parent's Workbook, Lesson III B.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This thesis was written in response to a need for parents to deal more effectively with their children, especially in a positive, non-threatening way. In her eleven years as a teacher the author had many opportunities to confer with parents. There seemed to be a relationship between a child's achievements, feelings toward her/himself and peers, and the parenting skills evidenced by the parents. The author observed many parents who either lacked these skills or who could benefit from additional knowledge.

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a program to help parents acquire these skills. The author felt that the best way to do this was to provide experiential learning experiences in an informal, accepting, and supportive atmosphere.

Research revealed that parents' programs seemed to meet with success, and also that many of these programs included certain common topics. The topics chosen for inclusion in this thesis were among them. The five sessions in this program dealt with active listening, "I-Messages", self-concept and acceptance, problem prevention and resolution, and positive guidance or constructive discipline.

Each session was structured to include opportunity for small group interaction, presentation of a new skill, opportunity to practice the skill, role-playing (where appropriate), and support activities. In each session, the author also included provision for extending and applying the skills into the home - actually putting the skills to use.

Also included were guidelines for leaders intended to insure success and to help them avoid pitfalls. Every effort was made to make this easy to use and require a minimum of preparation.

Many of the pages are intended to be duplicated and put into a notebook which will serve as a reference for course participants.

The author feels that this program could be implemented in a variety of situations - school, religious institution, community group, etc. and encourages other teachers and counselors to make use of it.

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